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Roup in Poultry

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Roup in Poultry

At this time of the year there is often considerable loss among poultry, especially chickens and turkeys, from various types of roup. Some of the types are known as chicken-pox (Contagious epithelioma), diphtheritic roup, and roup. By some investigators these are considered to be the same disease only attacking the birds in a different form. Other investigators maintain that there are two distinct diseases,—chicken-pox and roup. The latter being composed of three distinct types—nasal type, diphtheritic type and ocular types.

The chicken-pox affects chickens, turkeys, pigeons and geese. It appears on the naked parts of the head as small nodules or pimples varying in size from that of a pin point to that of a pea, or even larger. The nodules later form scabs. This disease usually runs a mild course and most birds recover.

The roup may be divided into the three types according to the lesions. All may be present in the same bird.

Nasal Type—This type first makes its appearance in the form of a cold. There is more or less of sneezing and a thin watery discharge from the nostrils. This discharge usually has an offensive odor. Later this catarrhal product becomes thicker and the nostrils close up, or are sealed up with the discharge. Often there is a bulging of the area in front of and below the eye. This is due to the inflammatory products collecting in the nostril cavities.

Diphtheritic Type—This type affects the mouth and throat and may accompany the nasal form. The diphtheritic ulcerations are yellowish or yellowish-white patches in the mouth and throat. These patches are membranes which result from dead tissue and it is from these that the disease is known as avian diphtheria. These patches may form inside the windpipe and thus interfere with breathing, or stop it altogether.

The Ocular Type—In this form there is inflammation of the covering of the eyeball. As the disease progresses the eyes are watery and the secretions become thick and finally cheesy. The eyelids stick together, and as the material accumulates a so-called "canker" is formed. The eyes bulge out and may even burst.

In any of the three types there is noted sneezing, shaking the head, and expulsion of mucus. There is a loss of appetite and the birds appear weak and gradually become emaciated. Breathing is often difficult and there is often a diarrhoea.

When the disease first makes its appearance there are no very marked general symptoms except slight colds, sneezing and mouth breathing. Later more general symptoms appear. The birds appear dull, sit around with wings drooping, feathers ruffled and appear depressed. In colder climates the disease usually assumes a chronic form, while in warmer climates it is more acute. A peculiar characteristic and offensive odor is associated with this disease, and poultrymen familiar with it often recognize the disease from the odor alone.

CAUSE

Roup is caused by a germ or virus which is present in the nasal discharge and probably in the droppings of sick fowls. A chronic type of the disease may be present in some birds which may not harm them but they can act as carriers and infect others. Birds may have the disease germs in their bodies for a time and not be affected unless they are weakened by exposure to cold or dampness, or by roosting in drafts, or in badly ventilated buildings. The beak of an infected bird covered with nasal discharge constantly contaminates water and feed.

TREATMENT

Correct any bad sanitation or hygiene, which may be a predisposing cause. The chicken house should be well ventilated, but should allow no drafts on the birds, and should be kept clean and free from dampness. It should be cleaned and disinfected daily with some good disinfectant. Isolate all sick birds. Burn or bury (deep) all dead birds.

Sick birds may be treated fairly successfully if one has the required amount of patience to treat each one individually. If there are swellings on the head or about the eyes the lesions must be opened and the contents removed with a cotton swab. The affected areas should then be painted with a 5% solution of silver nitrate, or tincture iodine. Inside of the mouth the diphtheritic patches should be removed with a cotton swab and the area painted with tincture of iodine, but not with silver nitrate. The eyes should be treated with a 10% solution of argyrol.

In case the nostrils are closed with mucus discharge, they may be washed out with a 10% solution of baking soda, using a medicine dropper or syringe to force it up into the passages. When the nostril is cleared then inject a small amount of hydrogen peroxide. This should then be followed by a small amount of the following mixture:

Oil of thyme	30 drops
Oil of eucalyptus	20 drops
Menthol	10 grains
Oil of petrol	2 ounces
Mix thoroughly	

This treatment may have to be repeated several times.

Sometimes good results may be had by dipping the heads of birds in a 2% solution of Kreso dip, or a strong solution of permanganate of potash. This must be done when the disease is in its earliest stages to get best results.

It is a good plan to put permanganate of potash in the drinking water, using enough to give the water a deep wine color.

PREVENTION

Keep all sick birds away from the rest of the flock. There must be a frequent thorough cleaning and disinfecting of houses and yards. Quarantine for two weeks all new stock and also birds returned from poultry shows. Examine each fowl occasionally if the disease is in the neighborhood.

VACCINATION

Vaccination has been practiced by some investigators with various results. The immunization of fowls against the various kinds of roup is still in the experimental stage. It has been learned that the vaccine must be prepared in each locality in order to be effective. There is no supply house at the present time that can furnish effective vaccine for all localities.

